



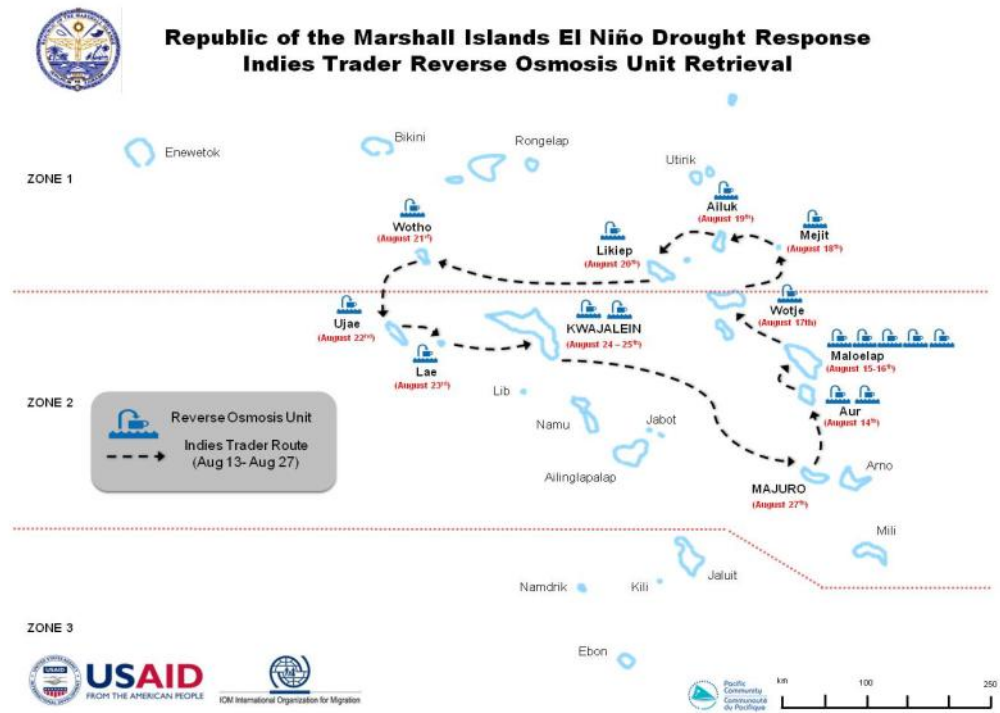
IOM MICRONESIA

Republic of the Marshall Islands

El Niño Drought Response

Situation Report #7

August 18, 2016



IOM RO Technician Kency Silk aboard the Indies Trader. © IOM Majuro 2016



IOM RO Retrieval team waves 'bon voyage'. © IOM Majuro 2016

Indies Trader Reverse Osmosis Unit Retrieval Route. © IOM Majuro 2016

Highlight – Reverse Osmosis Unit Retrieval

When drought strikes in RMI's outer islands, Reverse Osmosis (RO) Units offer an essential source of potable water for communities in need. IOM, together with the Majuro Water and Sewer Company (MWSC), maintained a stock of 52 RO units that were deployed as needed throughout the RMI outer islands during the 2016 El-Niño induced drought.

The use of these RO Units, however, must be reserved for times of emergency. As El Nino continues to recede, the primary source of water in the outer islands - rainwater catchment systems – returns. Improved conditions now allow for the retrieval of the RO Units so they can be cleaned, repaired and repositioned for the next emergency response.

IOM and MWSC departed on August 13th 2016 to retrieve all RO units still deployed in the outer islands. The estimated two-week voyage will cover 16 communities on ten different island / atolls.



Beneficiary meeting on Ujae Atoll with their complete RO unit. © IOM Majuro 2016

Situation Overview

Despite the return of rainfall to normal levels continuing throughout the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI), problems persist throughout the outer islands due to the long-term effects of drought. Local food crops are still recovering, and beneficiaries have reported negative economic impacts caused by the El Nino induced drought. The International Organization for Migration (IOM) is dedicated to addressing both immediate needs as well as the longer lasting negative impacts of disaster. For these reasons, the IOM USAID funded drought response is still ongoing. IOM Majuro is excited to announce many new upcoming projects and distributions.

Upcoming Distributions

■ August 18th—21st, 2016

IOM charter vessel M.S.Mata to distribute USAID hygiene items and food assistance to Arno and Mili atolls. In addition, six RO units will be retrieved in partnership with MWSC.

■ September 5th—23rd

IOM charter vessel M.V.Kwajalein to distribute the second two-month supply of food assistance and additional hygiene items to 11 moderately and severely affected island/atoll.

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IOM RESPONSE



Kabin Meto Rainwater Harvesting Improvement Program

During the 2016 drought response, the Government-led WASH Cluster produced the *2016 Rainwater Harvesting Improvement Program*. The Program aims to “improve and expand on the use of rainwater harvesting systems in order to... provide a long-term, sustainable source of water collection that extends beyond times of disaster.”

IOM recently received funding from the New Zealand Embassy to implement the Program in three select locations that rely heavily on rainwater catchment: Wotho, Ujae and Lae.

Based on recent observations by IOM personnel in all three atolls, focus will be on repairing guttering systems, the crucial component of capturing rainwater. In select instances, roofing repairs and the construction of cement storage-tank platforms will also take place.



Example of guttering system in need of improvements in Wotho, Wotho. Enclosed downspouts, elbows, and gutter brackets will be added to maximize potential captured water, which is essential for future drought preparedness.

Procurement of the materials is underway and the WASH Cluster will soon finalize staffing of three teams – one for each beneficiary atoll. Each team will be composed of RMI Government and partner staff that have all of the expertise needed to make improvements to existing harvesting systems together with communities.

The materials are expected to arrive in Kabin Meto by early September with community mobilization and improvements set to begin in October 2016.

IOM sends its thanks and appreciation to USP for technical assistance and to True Value and Do It Best for coordination during the procurement process.



Beneficiary Feedback and Female Hygiene Kits

Beneficiary followup surveys and feedback from *Cookhouse Confidential* female community meetings conducted by IOM partner “Women United Together Marshall Islands” (WUTMI) have played an integral role in the 2016 IOM El Nino drought response. Over the past month since the first round of distributions, the IOM drought response team compiled and analyzed the feedback received through both forums in order to improve the upcoming distribution structure and logistics.

In response to beneficiary feedback, additional distribution points will be added to the September 5th distribution route in order to increase beneficiary ease of transport of distributed goods and to ensure fair distribution.

Female beneficiaries also expressed a continued need of female hygiene items. A second, more focused female hygiene kit has been created in response to the women’s needs and preferences. The second round of female hygiene kits will be distributed to all moderately and severely affected islands / atolls on the September 5th distribution.



Island Clean Up Contest

During any response activity, it is important to be aware of potential negative impacts. Here at IOM Majuro, we understand that supplemental food assistance creates additional waste on outer islands where trash removal and recycling centers are not available. In an effort to mitigate these effects of the response, we have created an island **Clean Up Contest!**

Radio announcements will be made in the weeks leading up to the next round of supplemental food assistance for islands to begin collecting their trash. Once the IOM Response Team arrives on island, the trash will then be collected and brought back to Majuro for sorting and recycling at the Majuro dump.

The top three islands with the most trash bags collected per person (bags/island population) will receive a prize for their island to be delivered with the final round of supplemental food assistance to the severely affected atolls. Prizes include new pushcarts, wheelbarrows, and lawn mowers.

IOM’s activities are funded by and conducted in partnership with the following Organizations:



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